

**Have you considered having your baby at a.....**

## **Community Maternity Unit**

Counties Manukau District Health Board has three Community Maternity Units. These are amongst the largest Community Maternity Units in the country. The Units are based at Botany Downs, Papakura and Pukekohe.

The units are managed by experienced midwives and provide birthing facilities, as well as ante-natal and post-natal services.

Many women are not aware that they can have their baby at their local Community Maternity Unit, or women have questions about the birthing facilities at the Community Maternity Units.

This brochure will hopefully answer some of those questions for you.

### *Who can have their baby at a Community Maternity Unit?*

The Community Maternity Unit's are designed to provide birthing facilities to women who have a low risk pregnancy. This includes first-time mothers.

Women should also have no major medical problems or major complications in previous pregnancies. If you are unsure about whether it is advisable for you to have your baby at a community unit please ask your midwife or doctor.

### *What sort of problems would prevent me from having my baby at a Community Maternity Unit?*

If you have any of the following you will need to have your baby at Middlemore Hospital:

- Previous caesarean section
- A birth occurring before 36 weeks
- Twin pregnancy
- Breech (bottom first) birth
- A baby that is very small
- Pre-eclampsia (toxaemia)
- Diabetes

However you can still have your post-natal care at the Community Maternity Unit:

### *Is it safe?*

Yes.

Evidence from international studies show that Community Maternity Units are a very safe option for birth for low risk women and babies, and evidence from our own community units confirms this.

Women choosing to birth at Community Maternity Units appear to receive fewer interventions than women birthing at larger hospitals do and their babies are born in very good condition.

In most cases Midwives are able to identify women who should not have their baby at the Community Maternity Unit (during the pregnancy) so it is very rare that problems occur.

However emergency equipment and skilled staff are available at all the Community Maternity Units.

*Do you have pain relief available?*

Yes.

Community Maternity Units have a wide range of pain relief options available including:

- Hot packs
- Warm pools (waterbirths are an option)
- Entonox (gas & air)
- TENS machine (this can be hired)
- Pethidine

The only method of pain relief not available is epidural anaesthesia. However should you require an epidural during labour it is possible to transfer to Middlemore hospital from the community unit to receive epidural anaesthesia.

*What about if I need to transfer?*

There are a small number of women who will need to transfer to Middlemore hospital during their labour. This is more likely to happen if you are a first-time mother, when the chance is about 1 in 5 (which also means 4 out of 5 of you will have your baby as planned at the Community Maternity Unit).

The most common reason for transfer is when the labour is progressing too slowly.

If you do need to transfer to Middlemore Hospital your Midwife will explain the reasons for this, and will travel to Middlemore Hospital with you.

If you do not already have a midwife and want to ensure that you choose a Midwife who will support your decision to have your baby at a Community Maternity Unit (as long as your pregnancy remains normal), contact your local Community Maternity Unit who can provide a the names of local midwives.

Otherwise, please discuss this option with your Lead maternity Carer or named midwife.

For further information please contact your local Community Maternity Unit.

**Phone Numbers**

Botany Downs .....534 6063

Papakura.....299 9102

Pukekohe.....09 2370640

**Address and location maps available on Healthpoint**